

Message Text

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APPROVED BY: NEA:ALATHERTON

S/S:PSHANKLE

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

SECRET STATE 166796 TOSEC 070021

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT NEW DELHI 9255 SENT SECSTATE DATED JULY 10.

QUOTE

SECRET NEW DELHI 9255

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PASS CINCPAC

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, PFOR, XO, US, IN

SUBJECT: PROPOSED INDIAN OCEAN DEPLOYMENT

REF: STATE 161151

1. HAS ANYONE THOUGHT ABOUT THE PROPOSED DEPLOYMENT OF THE
FOUR-SHIP TASK GROUP INTO THE INDIAN OCEAN JULY 17 IN CON-
NECTION WITH THE PRESENT SITUATION IN INDIA? IF NOT, I
HOPE YOU WILL. THE DEPLOYMENT COULD NOT POSSIBLY COME AT A
WORSE TIME. MRS. GANDHI IS ALREADY CHARGING THAT FTRIGN

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FORCES SUPPORTED THE "RIGHTIST" GROUPS AGAINST WHOM SHE DE-
CLARED THE EMERGENCY, AND SOME OF HER PARTY MEMBERS ARE

POINTING SPECIFICALLY TO THE CIA. MRS. GANDHI HAS IMPLIED THAT SHE BELIEVES THE USG OPPOSES HER ACTIONS (IN SPITE OF OUR "NO COMMENT" POSTURE). THE AMERICAN PRESS CRITICISM IS CITED BY SOME AS PROOF THAT THE US IS AGAINST THE EMERGENCY. WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF DRAWING DETAILED DIAGRAMS FOR THE GOI AT HIGHER LEVELS HERE OF HOW ALL THIS WILL AFFECT INDIA-US RELATIONS. A NAVAL ACTION LIKE THE ONE PROPOSED WILL TIE OUR HANDS. WHATEVER WE SAY, GIVEN THE TIMING MRS. GANDHI WILL SEE IT AS DIRECTED AGAINST INDIA. IT WILL REVIVE HER FEARS OF A "THREAT FROM THE SEA" (WHICH SHE HAS NOT TALKED ABOUT RECENTLY) AND WILL PROBABLY CONVINCE HER THAT WE REALLY ARE BEHIND THE RIGHTIST OPPOSITION LEADERS WHO SHE HAS JAILED OR AT THE VERY LEAST THAT WE ARE RESORTING TO SOME BLATANT GUN BOAT DIPLOMACY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE LAST TWO WEEKS IN INDIA. SHE CERTAINLY WON'T LISTEN TO ANY PROFESSONS ON OUR PART OF AN INTEREST IN GOOD RELATIONS WITH INDIA.

2. I REALIZE THIS NAVAL OPERATION HAS PROBABLY BEEN UNDER PREPARATION FOR QUITE SOME TIME AND WILL BE BOTH DIFFICULT AND EXPENSIVE TO RESCHEDULE. I NEVERTHELESS STRONGLY URGE THAT THERE ARE TIMES WHEN POLITICAL CONCERNNS MAY BE OVERRIDING AND THIS MAY BE ONE.

3. IN SHORT, IF LEWJRE GOING TO CONTINUE TELLING THE GOI THAT GOOD RELATIONS MUST BE A TWO-WAY STREET, THEN WE'VE GOT TO DO OUR PART TOO. IF WE PLACE ANY VALUE ON GOOD RELATIONS WITH THIS, THE LARGEST AND MOST POWERFUL INDIAN OCEAN LITTORAL STATE, THEN WE SHOULD PROMPTLY RECONSIDER AND REVERSE THE DECISION TO DIS-PATCH THE TASK GROUP AT THIS TIME. I'M NOT ONE FOR GOING OUT OF OUR WAY TO BE NICE TO INDIA, BUT I THINK THIS IS A SITUATION WHERE WE MUST TAKE INDIAN REACTION INTO ACCOUNT OR WE'LL BE BACK WHERE WE WERE FOUR YEARS AGO.

4. I REQUEST THIS BE PASSED TO THE SECRETARY.

SAXBE

UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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